System and Education Research in Computer Networking, with partial support from UNDP. These programmes are aimed at building institutional infrastructure training scientific manpower and undertaking research & development to solve some of the industrial problems using computer technology.

In addition, Government have also taken the following steps;

(i) As per the new Industrial Policy, the foreign equity up to 51% has been allowed under the automatic clearance scheme to encourage large companies including foreign companies having closely held technologies to setup manufacturing facilities in India. Similarly large units and foreign companies are allowed to have equity participation up to 24% in the small scale units.

(ii) The liberal import of designs and drawings have been allowed utilising the Exim Scrips.

(iii) The procedures for inviting foreign technicians/experts to assist the Indian companies in upgrading computer technology have been relaxed. Units can approach Reserve Bank of India directly for the release of foreign exchange.

(iv) The units have been given more autonomy for substantial expansion and broadbanding of their products.

(c) and (d). Liberalised policy measures taken by the Government have been given wide publicity and relevant press notes have been issued in this regard by the office of Chief Controller of Imports & Exports, Ministry of Industry and Reserve Bank of India.

Suggestion for Creation of a Consumer Welfare Fund.

1060. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received suggestions for the creation of a Consumers Welfare Fund.

(b) if so, whether the Government have also received representations for the constitution of a working ground to study the Quasi-Judicial mechanism of a Public Utilities Commission to ensure public accountability by them; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) to (c). Yes, Sir. In the 10th meeting of the Central Consumer Protection Council, two resolutions were passed for the creation of a Consumer Welfare Found and for the constitution of a Working Group to study the Quasi-Judicial mechanism of a Public Utilities Commission to ensure public accountability. The working Group has already been constituted Recently, Ministry of Finance has passed the Central Excises and Customs Laws (Amendment) Act, 1991 (No. 40 of 1991) which provides for creation of a Consumer Welfare Fund. The Found will be utilised by the Govt. for the welfare of the consumers in accordance with such rules as Govt. may make in this behalf.

Increase in the Limit for Small Scale Industries

1061. SHRI CHANDRESH PATEL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received any proposals/representations/